Fellowship in Prayer

"For a world united in prayer"

"O world of muddled men,
Seek Peace with God again.
In the humble faith that kneels,
In the Hallowed Name that heals,
In the courage of a tree,
In the rock's integrity,
In the hill that holds the sky,
The star you lift your heart up by,
In the laughter of a child
Altogether undefiled,
In the hope that answers doubt,
Love that drives the darkness out,
O foolish, frightened, frantic men
Take God by the hand again."

(Author unknown— Sent in by Mrs. Thomas M. Taylor)

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OUR PURPOSE

To promote the practice of prayer among ALL religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

22 East 29th Street New York 16, N.Y.

Volume XVI April 1965 Number 2

EASTER SUNRISE

In glowing aureole of Easter Dawn,
Amidst Nature's artistic bloom array,
The pilgrims of varied race and sect
Ascend to shrines of stone and clay
Adriotly set, like emerald gems,
In mountings of God's diadems.

With spirits wrapped in robes of faith,
They eagerly climb the cross-crowned peak
And chant great hymnodies of praise
For boons He blest the strong and weak,
While Nature models new styles of spring
Before folk who throng beneath her wing.

Where are your crowns, cruel kings and czars?
Subduers of states by cannon's blight!
Arise from your forgotten graves
And watch the advent of peaceful might:
The unarmed vanguards of love's vast fleet
Who rive the fetters from our feet;

Re-open your eyes, cataracted by greed,
To see the grandeur which is God's
And all the marvels conceived by Man;
Lend ears, once deafened by firing squads,
And hear the Prophet's solemn cry
That brings acclaim from low and high:

Climb, pilgrims, climb! Hold ever Love in sight,
You soon shall reach the placid, empyreal height!

— Aarno Davidson

EDITORIAL

THE SEARCH FOR PEACE

If any one word has dominated the thoughts of individual men and nations in recent months it has been *peace*. As each of us, in his own way, seeks inner tranquility and communion with God, it becomes increasingly obvious that the peace man finds with himself is at best short-lived and at worst false if he does not also seek harmony with his fellow man.

A full twenty years ago, the worst war that man has yet perpetrated on the world was approaching its end. Those battles and mass killings did stop, mercifully, but yet the war has continued. It manifests itself in continuing Koreas and Congoes and Vietnams, in persistent distrust and suspicion between governments, in shameful discrimination and injustice within nations—in sinful selfishness among individuals.

In connection with the racial conflagration that goes on in the United States, a James Russell Lowell poem, which also is a hymn, has been quoted:

> Once to every man and nation
> Comes a moment to decide,
> In the strife of truth with falsehood,
> For the good or evil side;
> Some great causes, God's new Messiah,
> Offering each the bloom or blight,
> And the choice goes by forever
> 'twixt that darkness and that light.

That "moment to decide" truly seems to be at hand. We don't have to look far beyond our own neighborhoods—let alone our cities, states or nation—to find situations that give urgency to the choice between "the good or evil side."

It is particularly fitting that man's search for peace increasingly has brought to attention and discussion the words of a man of God revered

not only by those of his own religion but by men of many faiths and persuasions—the late Pope John XXIII. Just two years ago this Easter week, the Roman Catholic pontiff issued his last—and probably his greatest—encyclical, *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth). The document has been the source documents of international gatherings, the subject of deepening consideration at all levels. The secret of its appeal, it has been said, is that it reads not only like a letter addressed to Catholics and all men of good will, but "like a personal letter addressed to each one individually."

It is a privilege to set forth a few sections of the encyclical:

PACEM IN TERRIS

EVERY MAN IS A PERSON WITH RIGHTS AND DUTIES

First of all it is necessary to speak of the order which should exist between men. Any human society, if it is to be well-ordered and productive, must lay down as a foundation this principle, namely, that every human being is a person, that is, his nature is endowed with intelligence and free will. By virtue of this, he has rights and duties of his own, flowing directly and simultaneously from his very nature, which are therefore universal, inviolable and inalienable.

If we look upon the dignity of the human person in the light of divinely revealed truth, we cannot help but esteem it far more highly; for men are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, they are by grace the children and friends of God and heirs of eternal glory.

* * *

THE RIGHT TO WORSHIP GOD ACCORDING TO ONE'S CONSCIENCE

Every human being has the right to honor God according to the dictates of an upright conscience, and therefore the right to worship God privately and publicly. For, as Lactantius so clearly taught: *We were cre-*

ated for the purpose of showing to the God Who bore us the submission we owe Him, of recognizing Him alone, and of serving Him. We are obliged and bound by this duty to God; from this religion itself receives its name. And on this point Our Predecessor of immortal memory, Leo XIII, declared: *This genuine, this honorable freedom of the sons of God, which most nobly protects the dignity of the human person, is greater than any violence or injustice; it has always been sought by the Church, and always most dear to Her. This was the freedom which the Apostles claimed with intrepid constancy, which the Apologists defended with their writings, and which the Martyrs in such numbers consecrated with their blood.*

* * *

GOD AND THE MORAL ORDER

The order which prevails in society is by nature moral. Grounded as it is in truth, it must function according to the norms of justice, it should be inspired and perfected by mutual love, and finally it should be brought to an ever more refined and human balance in freedom.

Now an order of this kind, whose principles are universal, absolute and unchangeable, has its ultimate source in the one true God, Who is personal and transcends human nature. Inasmuch as God is the first Truth and the highest Good, He alone is that deepest source from which human society can draw its vitality, if that society is to be well ordered, beneficial, and in keeping with human dignity. As St. Thomas Aquinas says: *Human reason is the norm of the human will, according to which its goodness is measured, because reason derives from the eternal law which is the divine reason itself. It is evident then that the goodness of the human will depend much more on the eternal law than on human reason.*

* * *

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PRESENT DAY

Our age has three distinctive characteristics.

First of all, the working classes have gradually gained ground in

economic and public affairs. They began by claiming their rights in the social-economic sphere; they extended their action then to claims on the political level; and finally applied themselves to the acquisition of the benefits of a more refined culture. Today, therefore, workers all over the world refuse to be treated as if they were irrational objects without freedom, to be used at the arbitrary disposition of others. They insist that they be always regarded as men with a share in every sector of human society; in the social and economic sphere, in the fields of learning and culture, and in public life.

Secondly, it is obvious to everyone that women are now taking a part in public life. This is happening more rapidly perhaps in nations of Christian civilization, and, more slowly but broadly, among peoples who have inherited other traditions or vultures. Since women are becoming ever more conscious of their human dignity, they will not tolerate being treated as mere material instruments, but demand rights befitting a human person both in domestic and in public life.

Finally, the modern world, as compared with the recent past, has taken on an entirely new appearance in the field of social and political life. For since all nations have either achieved or are on the way to achieving independence, there will soon no longer exist a world divided into nations that rule others and nations that are subject to others.

Men all over the world have today—or will soon have—the rank of citizens in independent nations. No one wants to feel subject to political powers located outside his own country or ethnical group. Thus in very many human beings the inferiority complex which endured for hundreds and thousands of years is disappearing, while in others there is an attenuation and gradual fading of the corresponding superiority complex which had its roots in social-economic privileges, sex or political standing.

On the contrary, the conviction that all men are equal by reason of their natural dignity has been generally accepted. Hence racial discrimination can no longer be justified, at least doctrinally or in theory. And this is of fundamental importance and significance for the formation of human society according to those principles which we have outlined above.

For, if a man becomes conscious of his rights, he must become equally aware of his duties. Thus he who possesses certain rights has likewise the duty to claim those rights as marks of his dignity, while all others have the obligation to acknowledge those rights and respect them.

When the relations of human society are expressed in terms of rights and duties, men become conscious of spiritual values, understand the meaning and significance of truth, justice, charity and freedom, and become deeply aware that they belong to this world of values. Moreover, when moved by such concerns, they are brought to a better knowledge of the true God Who is personal and transcendent, and thus they make the ties that bind them to God the solid foundations and supreme criterion of their lives, both of that life which they live interiorly in the depths of their own souls and of that in which they are united to other men in society.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace
Where there is hatred . . . let me sow love
Where there is injury . . . pardon
Where there is doubt . . . faith
Where there is despair . . . hope
Where there is darkness, light
Where is sadness, joy

O Divine Master, grant that I may
not so much seek
To be consoled . . . as to console,
To be understood . . . as to understand,
To be loved . . . as to love,
For
It is in giving . . . that we receive,
It is in pardoning, that we are pardoned,
It is in dying . . . that we are born to
eternal life.
Amen.

THE HALT

Mary Lamoreaux Burnell

In all army discipline there is no word more important than the word "halt." It has a great deal more meaning than is discovered in the sound, or in the direct bearing upon it which takes place in action.

The word really signifies a stopping for the purpose of a new direction or a new energy, or the carrying out of a new command; but in that moment of halt there is the negation of everything. Whatever has been done up to the present moment stops. Without any consideration of what is to take place in the future—stop! Without yet knowing what command is to follow, and the direction to be carried out—stop.

If one were able to put into his experience that stop, he would find the immense Intelligence flowing into him at that moment. Intelligence does not flow into receptacles that are already full. It is a general supposition that if the army is marching in one direction, it cannot right about face, it cannot march in the other direction, until it has passed through the halt.

If one were able to introduce that moment of estoppel, he might work wonderful miracles in his experience for in that moment of estoppel the reverse may take place, without following as a movement. One does not understand that because the mind is given to consecutiveness. It seems to depend upon preliminaries, antecedents, before it can introduce its consequences. But that is because the mind is persuaded in a false maneuvering and does not understand any other way. If it is under some commandment, it may be told to stop, and that is the command of the sages.

The beginning of the works of Patanjali, the greatest of all teachers on the subject of meditation, consists in a definition of the Yoga, the estoppel of the organ of thought. And when that commandment is put upon one, and he is obedient to carrying it out, he will find the fine point in which all miraculous action may take place. It is in that moment of nothingness that miracles are performed. For miracles do not depend upon time or space; they do not depend upon the bulk of matter; they are not dependent upon the connection between matter and mind. They are

entirely founded upon negation—where there is nothing.

Now, actions that flow pell-mell over each other, tripping each other, interfering, introducing confusion, cannot receive the action of the Spirit. *But the act of God is found in that still place where everything is motionless.*

Some have supposed that it is therefore necessary to withdraw from the material life, such as the abodes of civilization, large cities, centers of enterprise, in order to obtain the quiet of the estoppel of the organ of thought. But such as have believed in this fashion have gone astray. They have followed out fanatical forms of living, encouraged actions that are not wise, introduced forms of asceticism quite unnecessary.

The true understanding is that the quiet may take place—the nothing may be in evidence, absolute non-action—in the midst of confusion, noise of cities, the blowing of whistles, the rattling of trains, the noise of cars. True action takes place when the quiet is obtained which is not found by departure from centers of confusion.

If one cannot discover the quiet in the midst of noise, he is not equal to finding it in the mountainous retreats, nor beside the brooks, nor out in the great expanse of the fields and under the skies. If he cannot find silence in the midst of noise, he has not yet opened his consciousness to the way, the path, the door that is the only means of admission into reality.

So the halt does not take place as an evident release from action, but it takes place in the consciousness, where one is able to stop long enough to let the true come through, and in that the miracle is performed.

It is more important to know how to obtain this quiet than to understand how to govern cities and nations. It is more important than to be rulers of kingdoms or of worlds—to know how to obtain the quiet in the midst of confusion.

WHEN GOD TELLS US TO WAIT

Buddy Arnold

God often answers prayer by telling us to wait. Prayer isn't always answered immediately. Often this results in confusing the no answer with the *wait* answer.

Patience is lacking today. It has become a rare item upon the shelf of life. Man is constantly being lead into a footrace with life. He wants things now—not later. And the world is eager to spoil an erring son of God. The lack of patience is best revealed in the behavior of our young people. They want the fruits of adult life right now. Yet one cannot speed up time or age. One cannot hurry God. It is impossible.

No man knows what method by which the Heavenly Father tells time. Man constantly is making the mistake of expecting God to answer his prayers immediately. We cannot pray in this manner. We must pray with the *His will be done* attitude. We must let go and let God. *We must be willing to let God work things out for us.*

Remember that Moses didn't lead Israel out of bondage immediately; God had to prepare Moses for the task. Day after day Israel prayed for deliverance. And yet the people had to wait. They also had to be prepared. It took years for deliverance to come, but it came. God had only said to wait. Perhaps many people of that time thought that God had said no, and lost their faith.

Waiting is difficult. It can test our faith at times, but we should not permit our lack of patience to destroy our faith. Often what is impossible today is possible tomorrow. Often it is better to wait for something. It just makes that certain something more worth while.

I am a victim of cerebral palsy. I cannot walk. I have a hesitating tongue. This handicap has made me an expert in the art of waiting. Other people must serve me the fruits of life. I must wait for other hands to do a thousand things for me, and often willing hands aren't easy to find. So I must sit and wait. It is no use to sit and mope about it. That would only make things worse. There is a better way—the way of acceptance and of patience. I believe these are essential elements of an abundant prayer life, as well.

As a young boy I had an experience with the *wait* answer to prayer. I had just graduated from the eighth grade. I had very high grades and I had my heart set on continuing my schooling. I loved learning about the world around me.

Because of my handicap I could not attend public school. I had completed the required grade school work under a private tutor. I looked forward to the autumn when I could continue my education. But in the autumn the great blow fell. I could not go on with my schooling. My teacher had taken another position.

I was sick with sorrow. All my dreams seemed to have gone up in smoke. My future looked black. I watched my friends go to school that September morning, and I wept.

Because of my deep faith in God, I turned to him and prayed that He send me a teacher. Somehow I sensed that God had said *wait*. In time God would find me a teacher.

For nearly four years I waited. I saw my friends graduate from high school and leave for college. Yet, I knew positively that I would return to school. God had just said *wait*. God was going to find me a teacher.

By this time another dream was formed. I wanted to become a writer. People laughed, but a friend and I persuaded the editor of my home-town paper to hire me as a columnist. Only raw talent carried my column through the first few months. I knew nothing about writing. I felt the cold chill of failure begin to crawl up my back. I had to have more schooling. I wrote a letter to the local superintendent who was a close friend, asking for a teacher. Somehow I managed to hold my job for another three months.

Another autumn became reality. Still no teacher was found. But as I was visiting Superintendent Harold's home he gave me wonderful news. He had found me a teacher. I rejoiced in my heart, for I knew that God had worked a miracle through channels upon earth which He had provided. He found the teacher. He had said, *"Buddy, wait,"* and I never complained. I never lost faith. I only had to wait, and I did as I was told, and God was true to His word. God always answers prayers.

There are times that God seems to fail his sons and daughters upon earth, but such isn't the case. God

never fails. Man often fails himself. It is due to a lack of understanding, of patience, and of faith.

I believe in a God of love. I believe that God is a good God. Then why the *wait* answer to many prayers? There is a Divine plan for each person upon earth. Woven into life is a work of God that must be fulfilled. We just have to trust God. We have to permit him to lead us. We must not complain. We must be willing to walk many second miles with Him. We might have to walk through the valley of the shadow and many lakes of fire in order to have the work of God fulfilled in us. We might stumble in the darkness, but we must keep our eyes ever upon the Master. He knows every step of the way. He will lead us through. Just ahead is the green pasture of a more abundant life which He has promised.

Be willing to wait when God tells you to wait. Out of this waiting period might come unknown blessing. All of us who wait with the *His will be done* attitude will receive the gift of a discerning heart filled with the joy and peace of which this world cannot understand.

WHILE THE EARTH REMAINS

Plow the earth and plant the seed.
Planting claims no race, no creed,
Only man's essential need.

Through the centuries of Spring
Man has sowed, unfaltering,
Hopeful of a harvesting.

Plow the earth and plant the seed.
Planting claims no race, no creed,
Only man's relentless need,
Only man's relentless need.

— Edith Shaw Butler

MANY A RIVER. . .

Above all things, I ask humanity to adopt this commandment: Do not destroy. Do not demolish. Do not tear down. To the contrary, build up. Help when you can. If you cannot help, do not hinder. Then I will tell you this: take a man from the level where you find him and lead him to a higher level.

According to Vedanta you are pure and perfect. There is a state that is above good and evil and that state is yours. That state is higher than good; in comparison with it, good is only less different than evil. Evil does not exist for you as such. We call it ignorance.

A characteristic idea of Vedanta is that we ought to tolerate all religious conceptions and not force all men to unite in a same point of view; and that is because the end of all conceptions is the same. The Vedantist says in his poetic language: 'Just as many a river, being born in diverse mountains descends in winding or straight course to empty finally into the ocean, so, Oh Lord, all these beliefs and all these religions, issue from different points of view and follow a winding or a straight course ending in Thee.'

If there should be a Universal Religion, it ought not to be suspended in space nor time; it will be infinite like the God that it teaches of: its sun will shine on the servitors of Krichna and on those of Christ, on the saints and on the sinners without distinction; it will be neither Hindu, nor Buddhist, nor Christian, nor Mohammedan; it will be a sun of all religions and will hold infinite possibilities of development; its universality will em-

brace and contain all human beings from the most vile savage who is nearly an animal to the farthest evolved man who is nearly a superman worthy of being contemplated and of having his human nature doubted. No intolerance, no persecution will be found there because its doctrine will recognize the divinity in all men and in all women; it will aim uniquely to help humanity in the realization of its true divine nature.

Every soul has divine power. The aim is to manifest that power by controlling our nature outwardly and inwardly. Realize that, by work, adoration physical control or philosophy—by one of these means, by several or by all—and be free! Such is the essence of religion. The doctrines, the rites, the dogmas, the books, the temples, the forms, all of these are only secondary details."

— Swami Vivekananda

"Let us then labor for an inward stillness,
An inward stillness and an inward healing.
That perfect silence where the lips and heart
Are still, and we no longer entertain
Our own imperfect thoughts and vain opinions,
But God alone speaks in us, and we wait
In singleness of heart that we may know
His will, and in the silence of our spirits,
That we may do His will and do that only."

— Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Thoughts on Prayer

Thomas F. Doyle

THE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER

Prayer is one of God's greatest gifts to man. It enables him to communicate directly with the Creator whenever he wishes. Prayer is like a telephone from earth to heaven, except that there are never any busy signals, nor any risk of being told, "no answer."

If any assurance is needed of God's ceaseless interest in His creatures, it must lie in the miracle of instant accessibility to Him. Wherever he may be and whatever the hour, a man can instantly get in touch with his Maker. Whatever his grief or need, he can talk it over with God, confident that every word he utters will be heard.

This knowledge should give the greatest comfort. It means that a man need never be lonely; need never feel abandoned or neglected. It means that somewhere there is always One who understands perfectly, and, more important still, is always anxious to help. How or when God responds to prayer is His own secret; it is enough to know that no prayer is ever unanswered.

Prayer is a high privilege and a gracious blessing; but it is also an absolute necessity. No one can neglect it and live spiritually any more than a physical body can live without food or water.

That thought should give pause to those who complain that they have "no time" for prayer. Even the busiest man can find a moment or two to lift his soul to God. He must, in fact, pray, or risk spiritual atrophy or starvation. The great St. Paul never ceased reminding his followers of the indispensability of prayer in the struggle for salvation.

To be a Christian at all, one must pray without ceasing. Prayer helps man to be steadfast in his loyalty to God and His commandments. It is the only means by which he may gain strength and courage to continue what St. Paul calls "the good fight." Prayer keeps the soul vigorous and strong. It is the channel through which man experiences that inner peace and calm which are the soul's most precious boon.

PRAYER IS A "MUST"

"The mind of the flesh," says Scripture, "is enmity against God." There are times when prayer comes easy. On the other hand, there are occasions when prayer is a real effort. Some men feel that they could never become reconciled to daily and regular prayer. They even feel that it is somehow unreasonable for God to be so particular in the matter of praying.

The fact remains, however, that God does insist on prayer. He wants us to pray not merely as an homage to His infinite majesty and power, but because prayer is the very breath of the soul. Hard as it may sometimes seem, men must pray so that their souls may not die. If they persevere in the effort, in time prayer will come easy.

Some have called prayer an art; but it is an art that anyone who wishes to do so may master in time. Nor should it be forgotten that the more effort prayer takes, the more acceptable it is to God.

If anyone thinks that he can "get by" without prayer, he should be reminded of the dangers which immediately arise as soon as the practice is abandoned.

In the first place, the inner life begins to weaken. Whereas before a man may have found that sin was a burden of pain in his soul, he comes gradually to feel no sensation at all. Conscience becomes numb; the spiritual vision grows blurred; the spirit of worldliness grows apace. In no time at all, the sense of God's presence becomes lost. The soul is then like a ship adrift, a vulnerable target of all forms of temptation.

It sometimes happens that some deep personal tragedy, some soul-shaking experience awakens the non-prayer—the Christian drifter—to a sense of his dependence upon God. In his despair or sorrow he again speaks out of his soul to the Only One who can help him. Many a man has had occasion to thank some hard experience for re-discovering, as it were, not his own soul, but the love and mercy of God.

But no one should neglect even for a brief period, what is one of man's essential duties toward God. The wise man knows his own weakness. He realizes that life itself has neither relish nor hope unless the vision of God is kept intact. This is one of the chief benefits of constant prayer.

THE BISHOP'S CREED

When the evening hours begin and shadows near us fall, then rise to blend in harmony and quietness in the darkening sky above—each day is complete if I have had an opportunity to bring happiness to someone. I count the day as lost when I have failed to do so.

It follows that I must never cause unhappiness to anyone. It is so easy to speak a sharp, hasty word, thoughtlessly perhaps. I must be constantly on guard not to injure or offend a friend, a child, or a servant.

It is an evil think to speak angry or bitterly critical words that bruise and burn; even if such words are forgiven and fade in memory, they cannot be recalled.

Ah! but happiness is forever and no regrets remain.

When sunset hours of life begin and shadows are there dimly seen as they blend in harmony of peace with crystal lights above the clouds, no failures will be recorded there . . .

If I have been faithful to my creed.

If happiness has blessed the days of many loyal lives and mine, no thought of errors can arise . . .

If I have been faithful to my creed.

Happiness is forever when no blight of cruel acts or words has hurt the dear ones I have served and loved . . .

If I have been faithful to my creed.

— *G. Wallace Tibbetts*

"When you *really understand,*
there is *nothing* to understand."

These words, beyond thought,
spoke to my mind, as
brilliant Light,
whether within or without,
blinded my eyes;
Truth,
I had long sought,
brought me face to face
with *nought* . . .

Mercy clothed my shock with joy;
Presence made it clear,
there is *nought but You,*
You who spoke
from out all Light,
who burst through bonds;
a shaking earthquake,
a bolt of lightning,
stripping clean . . .

You only understand:
You know Yourself to be
The All, Reality;
and in this fleeting act
I understand;
You are my own Life's Mystery.

Lillian Wade Koerner

Helen Smith Shoemaker refers to prayer as--

"The bridge that we throw across the space between our weakness and God's strength—a bridge over which He can walk into the hearts of men."

THOSE BEAUT

A PRA

Lord, help me to do
Those beautiful things
That show Thy glory,
Those beautiful things
That bring gladness
To my friends,
Those beautiful things
That hearten and cheer
All those around me.

Give me the power
To surpass myself—
To see Thy eternal beauty
In all temporal things;
Give joy to my countenance
When I must endure
Tests that come my way.
Teach me to fight my battles,
If I must fight,
Not with harsh words
But with such love and kindness
That I may fill my enemies
Not with anger and disturbance
But with gladness.

Help me to do Thy will always;
And when I cannot,
At least make me repentant,
Yet loving, kind and smiling.
And when I have pride
Or am, at times, thoughtless,
Then let me be humble
And remember that I am
Far, very far from Thy glory.

And then, O Lord let me dwell
Less upon myself,
My improvement, or non-improvement,
My enslavements or non-enslavements;

Let me, instead, think of Thy countenance
And begin again to do
Those beautiful things
That add gladness to the hearts
Of my friends and neighbors.

IFUL THINGS

YER

O Lord, make me evermore sensitive
To Thy Divine Being;
Make me sensitive
To all Thy creation,
To every human being that I meet.
And let me do
Those beautiful things
That will make them happier
And bring them greater joy.

Thus let Thy countenance remind me
That my first concern in life is
To live by Thine image within me
And to express beautiful things
Toward all human beings,
Never forgetting
That every experience,
Every challenge, every test
Comes to teach me
To live ever more deeply
From within my soul.

And Lord, make me honest enough
Not to take for granted
Any of thy beautiful gifts.
Let me be grateful
For Thy numerous blessings,
For Thy many protections,
Given not only to me
But also to my beloved friends.
For all I receive daily
Teach me to repay,
At least in kind,
Or even better if I can.

Above all, O Lord,
Give me a thankful heart—
Thankful to Thee,
Thankful to my friends,
Thankful as well to my foes.
So that I may more freely
Do those beautiful things
That show Thy infinite glory.

— Joseph Stanley

APRIL'S PROMISE

Zelma S. Dennis

The harsh reality of everyday experience often engenders winter fears in our lives. Too often embittered by the commonplace, the sorrowful, the bleakness of frustration, we become spiritually entombed. We tend to forget that life has its moments of Springtime joy, the blossoming forth of beauty breaking the bonds of doubt which chain us in our winter dungeons of disbelief. April gives to me this renascence of seeking new creative expression and vital renewal of life itself. One experience I had in the mountains after an April snow storm gave me this magic memory to escape from winter's dreary imprisonments.

We were spending a weekend at a friend's cabin, not without certain misgivings since the weather forecast was for snow. Although the first day was rainy and miserable we stayed anyway, hoping for a better tomorrow. Happily, the day dawned clear and promising. After an early breakfast we went on a hike, eager with anticipation to see what the storm had left. What a reward for our city-smothered souls! No people moved about on the trail, only the native inhabitants—chattering birds and scampering squirrels who sent warnings ahead of our presence.

The air was clean and tangy against our cheeks but it merely whetted our excitement to go on up the trail. The snow had marbelized the needles and leaves and left mosaics on the bushes and hung crystalline pendants on the towering pines. Billowing clouds rose from the deep valley below, merging with the mountaintop to create a dreamlike world of vaporous enchant ment. We pressed onward to the top. The morning sun scattered diamonds from crystal-encased pine-needle points. Short, dried bushes were fantasies in white lace. Tall firs were green glass, scintillating with a million glowing fire points.

At the crown of the mountain, only a few trees had buffeted the whims of weather and were standing solitary and majestic in a splendor removed from human claim. Half of the trees were snow-covered, reach-

ing out over the mountain's rim with angular limbs bearing ermine cloaks. We were mist-enshrouded but azure skies occasionally routed these cloudy phantoms. Then up the slope on wind-swept feet came laughing April. She brushed the trees and snow fell in a glistening shower. It was so beautiful I thought I would burst with joy.

When I returned down from the mountaintop to the daily world below I knew that I would keep this day shining and wondrous, a rebirth of God's beauty in April's promise. And when the bleakness of winter threatened to hold my questing spirit I would remember and roll away the stone of doubt from my heart.

LOVE'S BROTHERHOOD BUILDS SECURE

Young world builds joy: a miniature universe
far worlds show older embryonic swirl
spreading strong roots in prayer deepened:
as trees or flowering weeds on mountains learn!

Where God His mystic Love anoints
sweet nourishment by rain is shared
with seasons' change His seed warmed bed:
in gyroscopic turns His Joy unfurls.

God's child His miracle garden digs
when parent sheltered warmth builds walls
and wee ones orphaned grow to learn:
God's Love as kindness sheltering homes.

Thus man through earth nears brotherhood
his cosmic reach for prayers firmed
all grown by Love in God shall know:
what trees (like weed) in mountains great have found!

— Alice Richmond

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As applied to the individual Consciousness by LuVerna Bauer, minister of Unity Christian Fellowship, Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

OUR FATHER

I address the Creative Cause, the Primeval Potter of all that is.

WHICH ART IN HEAVEN

I acknowledge the ever-expanding Cosmic Mind, the realm of divine ideas.

HALLOWED BE THY NAME

I recognize my Holy Nature created in the image and likeness of of universal good.

THY KINGDOM COME

I know this Holy Nature, God in embryo, is ever desiring to reveal itself through me.

THY WILL BE DONE

I realize God's divine purpose is to express His kingdom in manifest form.

ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

I discipline my imagination to form mental molds of perfection so the invisible realm of ideas can be moved into visible shape.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

I claim spiritual substance as my unlimited supply to feed my body with food, my mind with creative ideas, my soul with love, peace, and joy.

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS AS WE HAVE FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS

I cross out all unforgiving thoughts and attitudes from my consciousness. I replace them with coins of love, understanding, and givingness through abundant livingness.

AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

I guard myself against any human desire to use my new found power for self-aggrandizement or selfish purpose.

BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL

I free myself from every illusion of life by realizing that my world is a spiritual world, governed by a spiritual law, sustained by universal Mind essence of life, light and love.

FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER

I actualize the eternal God—energy by directing this power into channels of creativeness. I move God's Divine Design into manifestation to glorify myself and my Maker.

AND THE GLORY, FOREVER

I exalt my radiant Presence, the Christ within me, so my Holy Nature will express through my Soul in every avenue of my life and affairs.

AMEN

I know that fulfillment is Good eternally expressing Itself in new and higher form as Man. Verily, I stand in awe before my own Creative I AM as I become consciously conscious of the potential possibilities of my wonder Self.

THE SECRET OF VICTORY

W. J. Thompson

IN THE STORY of human progress and achievement it is thrilling to note the accounts of those who, in spite of all appearances—when things seemed darkest—still calmly and confidently showed by their actions that they thoroughly believed in the triumph of righteousness.

A shining illustration is the Old Testament story found in Jeremiah 32:9. The Babylonian army had surrounded Jerusalem and stood ready to move in and destroy everything! Jeremiah was in prison. His Uncle's son, Hanameel, owned a field nearby, which, in view of the threatening circumstances, seemed of no value whatever. But being a thrifty man, and knowing that his cousin Jeremiah had "strange" ideas, Hanameel called at the prison and offered to sell the land to him.

We read the result of that offer: "And I bought the field of Hanameel, my uncle's son, and weighed him the money—even seventeen shekels of silver." Just when real estate values had sunk to zero because of the encircling enemy, this man showed his complete confidence in God's promises by purchasing property! He said, in effect: "No matter how bad things look, I still trust in God. And I back my faith by my actions.

Such men and women, by their unfailing courage based on absolute trust in God's leadership, bring blessing beyond words. Like the thrilling sound of a trumpet call, they strengthen our faith and send us forth with quickened step and uplifted soul to win, as we sing:

> *"This is my Father's world, O let me ne'er forget*
> *Though the wrong may seem strong, God is the*
> *Ruler yet!"*

WE NEED more than a natural optimistic nature; we need courage which springs from undying faith in Almighty God and His promise of victory to all who put their trust in Him.

HOW DO YOU PRAY?

The Bible places great emphasis upon prayer. As a matter of fact, in one place we are admonished to "pray without ceasing!" If it is such a vital part of the Christian experience, it is more than "leave a message and run." It is more than a hurried recitation of our needs and wants. It is more than an emergency measure—a sort of panic button for Christians.

Prayer is our communication system with Heaven. Words beautifully chosen and eloquently spoken—unutterable groanings from within with which we are at a loss to match words—tears wrung out of a broken heart—these are all prayers.

But there are those precious moments in prayer when we listen—quietly. When we have finished our supplication we receive answers as the Holy Spirit moves upon our good sense, and opens our eyes to the instructions found in Holy Scripture!

We have just tearfully begged that "by some miracle" our Lord would save a loved one. The answer comes, gently, firmly, "Show him the way."

Or, we have asked, almost in desperation, "Dear Lord, please take me *out* of this situation." His loving answer is, "I'll see you *through*—My grace is sufficient for thee."

"Chastise my enemy, thou knowest *he* is wrong," we implore. The Spirit within whispers, "Love him."

Slowly, ofttimes painfully, we learn to pray, "Thy will be done," and prayer becomes an offering of our own will and way, and worship rises as incense from our hearts. We feel closer drawn to our Lord, and He becomes more precious. Our Christian experience becomes richer, deeper, more meaningful. Prayer becomes a privilege—not a duty; a blessed communion—a fellowship.

(From THE WAR CRY, publication of The Salvation Army)

For many the first step on the upward evolutionary path is the clear knowledge of a higher and a lower, an inner and an outer self, that is to say, a distinction between the divine spark and its abode, and an understanding of their relationship. Such belief, such knowledge, is not new; it has often been voiced. For example, St. Paul, in his letter to the Romans, declares himself well aware of these extremes, and affirms the difficulty of reconciling the "spiritual law" of his mind with the "sinful law" of his flesh. But the beginnings of this understanding have been sadly travestied. Such shallow teachings and dogmas as those of original sin and perdiction, a personal devil, redemption by a blood-sacrifice, forgiveness of sinful man by an appeased God, the "miserable sinner" slogan and many another, all owe their invention to attempts by mankind to rationalize a growing awareness of the two extremes—God and nature, life and form, the real man and his bodies—extremes that are being slowly bridged today by human consciousness.

Only gradually can the focussed center of truly human life take charge and the human spark of the divine flame become a conscious center of illumination and the dominating partner of the soul-body mechanism. Under its direction can be begun the fascinating use of training the personal bodies to be living and responsive instruments through which the three worlds of mind, emotion, and physical action may be controlled and mastered by the light of the divine life functioning consciously through a human center.

This theory of the concentration of the divine life, the One Life, at the higher mental level, and the realization that the true human center of consciousness is just this—a focus of the divine life, no less and no more—may become an experience in truth for those who will.

— *Edward L. Gardner*

(From DISCOVERY, published by THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA)

STANDING IN THE NEED OF PRAYER

Deane William Ferm

ONE OF THE MOST remarkable books that I have read in some time is Dag Hammarksjold's *Markings*, the posthumously published diary of the late Secretary-General of the United Nations. It is particularly significant not so much because of what is written—although this is indeed important—but because it was written at all!

Here was a man deeply involved in the international crises of our time, pushed to and fro by the problems of power politics, regarded with suspicion for fear that he might play favorites, seeking uneasy solutions to complex problems in a tension-filled nerve-wracking world. Yet here was a man at war with himself—and honest enough to admit it—trying to save his own soul, experiencing intense periods of personal anguish and doubt, and yet keeping ever before him the vision of hope and meaning—a vision which he found in his inner life.

The more one reflects on this diary and this man, the more one senses that it was this inward dimension of his life that gave strength to his outward actions. His depth of understanding of world problems was due to the character of his inner life. He was standing in the need of prayer and he knew it.

Each of us is standing in the need of prayer; none of us can be fully human without the development of this inward dimension, that outward actions derive their meaning from inner purpose. How much more simple it would be to communicate the importance of the inward dimension to Easterners rather than Westerners. How much our outlook on life is determined by where we live in this world and how we are raised!

The accepted viewpoint in our Western world is that we are part and parcel of the world of time and space. That which is read must be either spatial or temporal and measurable. Therefore, the world of the inner spirit which is beyond time and space is illusory and untrustworthy and unimportant. If we lived in India, however, we would probably say that the

Westerner is a prisoner of his own materialistic categories. For, the Hindu declares that space and time are illusory and that only the inner life of the spirit is real. The world of matter is maya or illusion or at least secondary reality; it is the atman that is primary reality. In fact, the Hindu declares that man's primary goal in this life is to discover his inner nature, his atman. Thus, to try to explain the field of physics to an Easterner is as difficult as it is to try to explain the reality of the inner spirit to the Westerner. This points up how much the East and the West have to learn from each other. We need to recognize the reality and importance of both the inner and the outer world.

The purpose here is not to deny the importance of man's outer world of action and external behavior. We hear enough about this aspect! But, rather, to point up the importance of man's inner world of meditation and contemplation. We do not hear enough about this dimension. To be sure, man's inner and outer worlds can never really be separated. But, just as the Eastern world overstressed the life of the spirit—which has delayed its scientific and technological development—so the Western world has overstressed the world of action, which has delayed its spiritual development.

It does seem that modern Western man is over-oriented to the world of things, objects and matter. The man of the West finds his salvation in action, in external things; and, therefore, he must constantly be on the go. Kenneth Fearing, in one of his poems, describes well our other-directed, object-centered, busy-bodied Western hero:

> And wow he died as wow he lived;
> Going wop to the office and bloomie
> Home to sleep and biff he got married
> And bam had children and oop got fired.
> Zowie did he live and zowie did he die.

Probably the best authority to whom we can turn in our Christian tradition is Jesus himself.

> And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose and went out to a lonely place, and there he prayed.

To be sure, Jesus healed the sick, preached in the synagogue, lived in the midst of the people, and went to the market place. He was a man of action. But he also recognized the need to withdraw from the outer world of action to be by himself, to cultivate the inner life. At every momentous occasion in his life he did not neglect the inner dimension. After he was baptized, he went into the wilderness by himself to think through this experience. On the night of his greatest crisis when he was betrayed, he went into the Garden of Gethsemane to be alone. Time and again he withdrew from the multitude to be alone with himself. He knew the importance of inwardness.

This dimension of inwardness, of prayer, of being alone, too often is restricted to very narrow limits—to an institutional church or certain kinds of prayers. This is perhaps the quickest way to quench the inner life. We might consider the dimension of the inner life as the discipline of pausing and thinking deeply and privately. One can pause and think deeply and privately in a variety of ways; for the inner life is cultivated not ao much by the place—although this may help—as it is by the state of mind. It could be though prayer in a church or in one's own room. It could be

It could be through prayer in a church or in one's own room. It could be through painting or some artistic endeavor. It could be through music or through nature. Whatever the means, pausing and thinking deeply is indispensable. One can understand why Whitehead of defined religion as *"What one does with his solitariness."* He is not denying here the importance of outward action; he is saying, rather, that outward action can achieve meaning only by virtue of its relationship to one's inner life.

What value is there to the inner life if we take it seriously? This is the kind of question that only a Westerner would ask! I suggest three values.

FIRST, it is in the inner life that we achieve a sense of purpose for our outward actions. The toughest battles in life are the inner battles; it is the outcome of these internal struggles that determine the meaning of our outer actions. No human being can ever escape this constant battle with himself—his beliefs, his values, his sense of integrity, his goals.

The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Church at Galatia writes of this civil war of man against himself. Here is how he expresses it:

> Here is my advice. Live your whole life in the Spirit and you will not satisfy the desire of your lower nature. For the whole energy of the lower nature is set against the Spirit, while the whole power of the Spirit is contrary to the lower nature. Here is the conflict, and that is why you are not free to do what you want to do. But if you follow the leading of the Spirit, you stand clear of the Law.
>
> The activities of the lower nature are obvious. Here is a list: sexual immorality, impurity of mind, sensuality, worship of false gods, witchcraft, hatred, quarreling, jealousy, bad temper, rivalry, factions, party-spirit, envy, drunkenness, orgies and things like that. I solemnly assure you, as I did before, that those who indulge in such things will never inherit God's Kingdom.
>
> The Spirit, however, produces in human life fruits such as these: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, fidelity, adaptability, and self-control—and no law exists against any of them.
>
> Those who belong to Christ have crucified their old nature with all that is loved and lusted for. If our lives are centered in the Spirit, let us be guided by the Spirit.

Here is the confession of an honest man who admits to the civil war that every man has to fight: his lower nature versus his higher nature, meaninglessness in life versus meaning. One senses this same battle within Dag Hammarskjold. He wrote in *Markings:*

> What I ask for is absurd; that life shall have a meaning. What I strive for is impossible: that my life shall acquire meaning.
>
> A modest wish: that our doings and dealings may be of a little more significance to life than a man's dinner jacket is to his digestion. Yet not a little of what we describe as our achievement is, in fact, no more than a garment in which, on festive occasions, we seek to hide our nakedness.

Yet, just as the Apostle Paul won his battle and exclaimed: "*Let us be guided by the Spirit,*" so Hammarskjold never gave up the battle for a sense of purpose; so he wrote:

> I don't know Who—or what—put the question, I don't know when it was put. I don't even remember answering. But at some point I did answer Yes to Someone—or Something—and from that hour I was certain that existence is meaningful and that, therefore, my life, in self-surrender, had a goal.

This inner search for significance is a never-ending one. The words that President Johnson used in his inaugural address to describe the approach to the Great Society can also be applied to our own inner struggle:

> It is the excitement of becoming—always becoming, trying, probing, falling, resting and trying again—but always trying and always gaining.

It is through the struggle within that one must find his sense of purpose.

SECONDLY, it is in the inner life that we attain a sense of perspective for what we do in the outer life. I don't know which comes first—purpose or perspective—they are probably mixed up together. It is through our pausing and reflecting that we put the events of life in their proper place. How we need through the inner life to gain a sense of perspective. The weight of the world does not rest on our shoulders. None of us in indispensable. From a larger perspective our problems are not as momentous as we sometimes think. We need to ask ourselves how we will look at our present problems ten months from now—or ten years from now—whether they will seem as important as they do right now. One way to do this is to look back at the seemingly momentous problems we faced ten months and ten years ago and see if we did not exaggerate them. We need a sense of perspective.

Now, we should not carry this notion to an extreme and say that nothing matters, but by pausing and thinking deeply we can help to distinguish the important from the unimportant.

The philosopher William James used to recommend frequent attendance at chapel for his philosophy students at Harvard. He said that going to chapel was much like the experience of a person who, being jostled about in a crowd, climbs up on a nearby doorstep, looks over the heads of the people, sees what the crowd as a whole is doing, and is then able to descend again into the jam and push in the right direction.

The discipline of the inner life gives us this sense of perspective, so that we don't just push for the sake of pushing—so that we just don't *zowie* live and *zowie* die—but that we push in the right direction and for the right purpose.

THIRDLY, it is through the discipline of the inner life that one can achieve a sense of peace. To be sure, this is dependent to a large degree on achieving a proper sense of purpose and perspective. I do not see how one can ever have any real peace of mind until he comes to terms with himself, until he achieves a sense of purpose and with it a sense of perspective. Nor do I mean a cheap kind of peace of mind which is smug and insensitive to the troubles of the outer world. But one can achieve a sense of well being and know that although there are problems to be faced and tensions to feel from which one can never fully escape, if one's motives are pure and one's conscience is clean, he can experience this sense of inner harmony.

One thinks of Martin Luther King who faces troubles and tribulations by the hour—yet who can retain a sense of calmness, dignity, joy, peace and patience—fruits of the higher nature. One knows that a man of his spiritual depth must achieve this sense of peace through periods of prayer and meditation. This is why he could say to the Negroes of Selma, Alabama, recently as they sought to register to vote:

> Let us be sure our hearts are right. Let us be willing to accept blows because it is better to be scarred in our bodies than in our souls.

It may be through music or poetry or silence or worship that we can have these moments of peacefulness which can then permeate our lives. Wordsworth speaks of "the harvest of the quiet eye"—"that inward eye which is the bliss of solitude."

Hammarskjold asks us:

> How can you expect to keep your powers of hearing when you never want to listen? That God should have time for you, you seem to take as much for granted as that you cannot have time for him.

Perhaps the ancient psalms most clearly reveal for us this sense of calmness and peace:

> Be still and know that I am God.

> I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills:
> From whence cometh my help?
> My help cometh from the Lord
> Who made heaven and earth.

> The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
> He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
> He leadeth me beside the still waters.
> He restoreth my soul.

> Search me, O God, and know my heart:
> Try me, and know my thoughts:
> And see if there be any wicked way in me,
> And lead me in the way everlasting.

The discipline of the inner life can reveal to us a dimension of life that is trustworthy and dependable and peaceful, which makes the still, small voice of God come into our lives.

We are born to serve our fellowmen, and we cannot properly do so unless we are wide-awake. There is an eternal struggle raging in man's breast between the powers of darkness and of light, and he who has not the sheet-anchor of prayer to rely upon will be a victim to the powers of darkness. The man of prayer will be at peace with himself and with the whole world; the man who goes about the affairs of the world without a prayerful heart will be miserable and will make the world also miserable.

Gandhi

NOTICES and COMMENTS

FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY. With publication of our next issue, we reach a milestone—the Fifteenth Anniversary of the incorporation of Fellowship in Prayer, on June 5. To mark the occasion, we plan to include a photograph of the beautiful portrait of Mr. Carl Allison Evans, the founder of the Fellowship, which was created by Artist Helen Dudley Young of Southern California and presented to us as a gift. It seems that many of our faithful friends may want to obtain extra copies of the June issue, which also will contain some historical data and highlights in the growth of the Fellowship. The presentation of this issue to those not yet acquainted with our work of extending the practice of prayer could result in many new subscribers and a valuable strengthening of our mutual endeavor.

LOVE DEFINED. There has been some encouraging response to the invitation to purchase copies of *"Love Defined,"* an essay by Aarno Davidson which appeared in our December issue. The well-known poet (winner of the 1964 poetry book award from the American Poets Fellowship Society of New York, among many honors) is donating all proceeds to our Fellowship. The beautifully printed essay, in folder form, is available at twenty-five cents per copy, or five copies for one dollar, either through Fellowship in Prayer or from Mr. Davidson—9543 La Canada Way, Sunland, California 90-1040.

MY MASTER HAS A GARDEN. An autographed copy of the new book, *My Master Has a Garden,* has been presented to our library by the noted Dr. Margaret Moore Jacobs of Clarendon, Arkansas. We are deeply appreciative of the gift. We also take pleasure in informing our readers that a new John B. Jacobs Memorial Library will be built in Clarendon in the near future in recognition of Dr. Jacobs' late husband's many contributions to the welfare of the community and also honoring the continuing literary accomplishments of Dr. Jacobs.

OUR OFFSET PRINTER. Our printer, Mr. Joseph Stanley, the president and owner of Dynamic Litho Press, is not only a man of prayer (his *"Those Beautiful Things"* is in this issue) but also an artist in photography.

A number of years ago, Dr. William Hung, the President of our Fellowship, happened to call at the Dynamic office and saw an enlarged photograph of a mountain in the Alps taken by Mr. Stanley. The picture was so beautiful that Dr. Hung strongly encouraged Mr. Stanley to forge ahead in creative photography. He did and has won recognition for artistic achievement. A number of his prints were selected for the Photography Exhibits in the Fine Arts Show, and they are now in the permanent safe-keeping of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Remembering Dr. Hung's encouragement, Mr. Stanley recently sent over to Dr. Hung a very large copy of the photograph in view over an Alpine summit. Dr. Hung wanted the Fellowship office to keep it in the hope that when we come to have another office room, this magnificent photograph may adorn one of its walls. "In Confucianism," said Dr. Hung, "the mountain is a symbol of benevolence. What a tremendous representation of massive benevolence!"

SUBSCRIPTION RATES. FIP is published six times a year at the rate of $3.00. Special rates are available for additional copies.

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We are sincerely grateful to those readers who have renewed, and are renewing their subscriptions. Those who have not yet done so are invited to renew as soon as possible. Ours is a nonprofit fellowship and only through the help and cooperation of those who are interested in our work can FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER be improved and extended throughout the world.

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DERELICT

In a derelict's garbage-can world
His fingers fumble scraps
Of stuff; his lips rehearse defeat
To bone and mash and meat

Polluting the form of man
And beaing the image of his tinsel gods
He could double for a statuary there;
Armour fashioned of and fashioning despair

"Breath within his nostrils,"
And grounded through the seasons weather
After weather, he mumbles low.
With tongue for talk need he stay so?

Turning back is never easy task,
Habits born of habits multiply
While slyly consequences come; decay
Is not the outcome of a single day—

But has he called and called for help?
Are we the derelict who stint
On brother love: the smug ones late
With Light for making pathways straight?

— Carla Patsuris

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